

March 2021

Forward Together Update

University of Northern Iowa

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Recommended Citation

University of Northern Iowa, "Forward Together Update" (2021). *UNI Response to COVID-19*. 124.
<https://scholarworks.uni.edu/covid19/124>

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Forward Together Update

March 11, 2021

Dear Panther Community,

It's been exactly a year since the World Health Organization declared COVID-19 a global pandemic. Unfortunately, during that time 520,000 American lives have been lost, including 5,621 Iowans.

All of the perseverance you have shown in remaining diligent with our mitigation efforts has made a real difference in allowing us to stand together and continue to be safe as a campus community. As we look ahead, we're seeing many positive signs, but please remember that some extra perseverance is still required.

We must stay the course and continue to do the things that helped get us here: wear masks, remain physically distanced, wash our hands, report symptoms through the Panther Health survey and get tested if needed.

And, please remember that the CDC says travel increases your chance of spreading and getting COVID-19. You should delay travel to protect yourself and others. The Panther Health survey has been modified to ask if you've been on a trip within the past 10 days that could [increase your risk of contracting or spreading COVID-19](#). Those who answer yes will receive recommendations on testing and staying home.

New CDC Guidance

One bit of positive news is the increasing number of people across the country who've been fully vaccinated, including nearly 18,000 in Black Hawk County.

This week, the Centers for Disease Control [released new guidelines](#) for those who have been vaccinated and we wanted to share some highlights with you.

First, even after being inoculated, the guidelines for behavior while on campus remain unchanged. In any public spaces - including residence halls and other campus buildings - masks must be worn and physical distancing adhered to in order to keep us safe.

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It is only two weeks after receiving the second dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine or first dose of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine that a person is fully vaccinated, according to the CDC.

Those individuals are able to gather indoors off campus with other fully vaccinated people without wearing a mask. They can also gather off campus with unvaccinated people from one other household without masks unless any of those people or those they live with has an **increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19**, the CDC says.

As the state and county continue to expand vaccine eligibility, the university is working closely with our local public health partners to prepare for increased vaccine distribution on campus for students, faculty, and staff. The supply of vaccines is still limited and information will be announced as it becomes available.

International Travel

This morning, the Iowa Board of Regents announced that it was lifting a ban on university-sponsored international travel that it imposed more than a year ago in response to the pandemic. UNI is reviewing this decision and will provide information to campus next week.

If you have a question, please visit forwardtogether.uni.edu or email it to forwardtogether@uni.edu. Thanks for all that you do to keep yourself, your family and the Panther community safe.

Stay Well,

John Vallentine,
Associate Provost for Faculty

Joseph Rayzor,
Director of Risk Management, Environmental Health and Safety